Study on Potential for Tobacco Exports

715. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Tobacco Board has made any study on the potential for tobacco exports from India:

(b) whether it is a fact that good scope exists for tobacco exports, if the quality is improved; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) The Tobacco Board closely moniters the potential for tobacco exports from India.

(b) and (c) As a result of uncertainties in same of our major markets, the global oversupply situation, and the anti smoking campaign the world over, the tobacco export sector is presently under strain. Hence, improving the quality is one of the requirements to compete in the world market.

Use of Black Cotton Soil for Tobacco Cultivation

716. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tobacco Board has made any study of the extent of black cotton soil being used for tobacco cultivation in West and East Godavari; districts;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether any assistance has been extended by Tobacco Board to these districts for tobacco cultivation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The extent of FCV tobacco grown in black soil during 1993-94 season is given below:—

District	Area Grown (Hec.)
East Godavari	2759
West Godavari	1224

(c) Yes, Sir. The Tobacco Board arranged supply of coal for curing, tied up crop loans from Banks, and extended assistance in the form of subsidy under various extension and development schemes.

Amendment in VABAL Scheme

717. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that (as reported in Economic Times of 11th February, 1994) recent amendment to value based Advanced Licencing Scheme (VABAL) have caused more confusion within the industry circle due to wrong interpretation of amendments;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that these amendements have, more than checking abuse of VABAL by unscrupulous operators, emboldened the indigenous manfacturers of plastic raw materials to take undue advantage of the situation; and

(c) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to modity the inherent imbalances in the VABAL Scheme, on the experience of past abuse, rather than scrapping the scheme gradually through a series of amendments?